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Lucia A Keegan 11/28/2006 10:00:12 AM From DB/Inbox: Lucia A Keegan

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Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 07435

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ACTION: POL  
INFO: ODC AGR PAO AMB DAO ECON STRASBOU DCM FCS SCI  
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DISSEMINATION: POLOUT  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: POL/D:BTURNER  
DRAFTED: POL:RWALLER  
CLEARED: NONE

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INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1003

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 007435

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2016  
TAGS: [FR](#) [LY](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)  
SUBJECT: MFA ADVISOR WORRIED ABOUT BULGARIAN NURSES, ASKS  
U.S. TO REINFORCE FRENCH MESSAGE TO LIBYA

Classified By: POL Deputy Bruce Turner, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Francois Touazi, FM Douste-Blazy's Advisor for the Persian Gulf and North Africa, told NEA Watcher November 16 that he was seriously concerned about the outcome of the re-trial of the Bulgarian nurses and Palestinian doctor accused of deliberately infecting Libyan children with HIV (some two hundred of whom are currently being treated in French hospitals). Touazi, who had just returned from a visit to Tripoli, said he raised the case and was disturbed by the harder tone he detected from his Libyan interlocutors.

"A few months ago they were assuring us this (re-trial) would settle things, and now they seem to be seeking further EU promises to help the families of the infected children," said Touazi. The Libyans, he continued, said they did not understand why France kept raising the issue since the nurses were not even EU citizens, much less French. "Why are you so insistent on this?" one Libyan official asked him.

¶2. (C) Touazi said the Libyans simply failed to grasp how the trial was perceived in Europe, and the impact of EU public opinion on foreign policy. He feared that the current re-trial might result in yet another death sentence for the medics, which he said would be disastrous for European relations with Libya.

Qaddafi Visit on Ice  
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¶3. (C) Confirming recent press reports that a visit by Muammar Qaddafi to Paris had been nixed, Touazi noted that the Libyan leader had expressed interest in visiting both London and Paris, and had heard an identical message from both capitals: We would be happy to receive you, but would want your visit to be as successful as possible; resolving

irritants (i.e., the nurses' case) would permit your visit to be a success.

#### France Asks US to Reinforce Message

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14. (C) Saying that the only Western powers Libya took seriously were France, the UK and the United States, Touazi asked that the USG reinforce the message to Libya that the time had come to resolve the medics' case in a responsible manner. NEA Watcher promised to convey this request to Washington.

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